

Staff Report

February 13, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Town Council
FROM: Merrill Buck, Town Engineer
RE: Presentation of Design Concepts following Council and Community Input to Provide Shade at the Loomis Train Depot Building and Blue Anchor Park

Recommendation

Receive a power-point presentation for a capital improvements project that proposes to provide a shade structure at the Loomis Train Depot Building and Blue Anchor Park. The updated design incorporates Council and community input from a presentation made December 12, 2023. Following the presentation, staff recommends that the Council adopt a resolution authorizing staff to complete the design package and advertise the project for bids.

Issue Statement

The adopted FY 2022-23 Capital Improvements Budget included a project to provide shade structures at Blue Anchor Park and the Train Depot. The full scope of this project had never really been worked out, but it was funded at a conceptual level with a \$75,000 budget.

Through the services of AEON Landscape Architecture, who is working with the Town under an on-call professional services contract, shade structure design concepts were prepared and presented to the Town Council on December 12, 2023. Comments received by the community and Town Council included the following:

- \$450,000 as a preliminary estimate seemed like a lot of money to spend on shade structures.
- Although expensive, the Town shouldn't break the project into phases or complete it piecemeal.
- Would a shade sail placed over the Blue Anchor Park playground have enough clearance from the top of the play structure.
- Could trees be planted to accomplish the same objective as the shade sails.
- Would the cost to plant large trees be cheaper than the cost for shade sails, while also providing shade.
- Could an arborist be consulted to determine why the existing trees haven't grown.

Discussion

Following the Council Meeting, staff performed a cost analysis and determined that large trees could indeed be planted in lieu of a shade structure, quite economically. Based upon this, the project was rescoped to include a mix of both trees and a shade structure. It was determined that the most

prominent and influential place to put the shade structure was over the plaza area next to the splash pad, which would cover the tables and benches. The updated design has therefore limited the use of shade sails to this area, while providing large replacement trees in other areas. By only placing the shade sail in the plaza area, this also ties to the fun, playful nature of the splash pad, while allowing for a variation of color and elevations to be used, without detracting from the historic and classic look and space of the Depot building.

Staff also met on-site with an arborist to critique the existing trees. Upon investigation, the arborist noted that many of the trees were stressed and showed signs of stunted growth. Some of this could be from poor soil conditions, however rocking the trees demonstrated that they had grown beyond their initial root ball. Their stunted growth was most likely due to pruning practices that have treated the trees more like a hedge. Even the large trees were hedged. There were also wounds on the trunks of most trees, created when the trees were small and vulnerable to excessive heat from the sun. The arborist also commented that if the objective was to provide shade, better tree species could be economically planted as replacements, even with root balls as large as 60 square-inches.

Recommendations for replacement trees include the use of oak trees, as they will grow large and tall and provide the desired shade. Oak trees also honor the Town's desire, as defined in the Municipal Code, to "conserve and protect the town's natural beauty and setting, including the rolling hills and oak trees, scenic vistas, and historic and environmental resources". Protected trees, under the Municipal Code, include the Blue Oak, Valley Oak, Interior Live Oak, and Oracle Oak.

Trees recommended for replacement are identified in the power point. This includes the replacement of perimeter trees with valley oaks and the replacement of the "founder tree" with the same species of Interior Live Oak, but larger. Other replacements would include an ornamental redbud tree that was topped to remove dead branches.

It's worth noting that the valley oak is a deciduous tree, that will lose its leaves in the winter. This was recommended by the arborist, as the warmth of the sun is a desirable feature in the winter, and the lack of leaves will help to achieve this. The founder's tree, as an interior live oak, is an evergreen tree. This will sustain its prominence as a leafy tree, year-round. It is also in a location that the shadow from the tree will mostly fall on the building.

Project Timeline

Following the presentation, staff will incorporate comments received into a final set of project plans and specifications which would then be advertised for bids. With a bid opening anticipated at the end of March, this would allow a construction contract to be recommended for award at the April Council meeting. Work would start shortly after that, giving the project a good chance of being completed in time for summer.

CEQA Requirements

The proposed project scope which consists of the construction of shade sails as an accessory structure and replacement tree plantings, is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15311 – Accessory Structures, and Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land.

Financial and/or Policy Implications

The Town's adopted FY 2022-2023 Capital Improvements Budget included \$75,000 in funding for the shade structure improvements. This is more than sufficient for the design of the project, but the construction cost, estimated at \$175,000, will require a supplemental project appropriation. A funding source would be identified, and the recommended appropriation would be requested, at the time the construction contract was brought before the Council for award.

Attachments

- A. Resolution
- B. Power-Point Presentation

ITEM 14 ATTACHMENT A

TOWN OF LOOMIS

RESOLUTION NO. 24 - _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOOMIS
AUTHORIZING STAFF TO COMPLETE THE DESIGN PACKAGE FOR THE
BLUE ANCHOR PARK SHADE SAIL PROJCT AND ADVERTISE THE PROJECT FOR BIDS**

WHEREAS, the Town has identified the Blue Anchor Park Shade Sail Project #22-18 as a needed improvement in the adopted FY 2022-23 Capital Improvements Program; and

WHEREAS, staff has presented design concepts to the Town Council which included the use of both new and replacement trees, along with the construction of a shade structure to meet the project objectives and provide shade in Blue Anchor Park and Train Depot plaza; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council supports the design concepts and would like to proceed with the construction of the project; and

WHEREAS, the next step in implementing the project is the preparation of plans and specifications and advertising the project for bids.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Loomis does hereby authorize staff to complete the bid package for the Blue Anchor Park Shade Sail Project #22-18 and advertise the project for bids.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 13th day of February 2024 by the following vote:

- AYES:**
- NOES:**
- ABSENT:**
- ABSTAINED:**

Mayor

ATTEST:

Deputy Town Clerk



Shade Improvements

at the

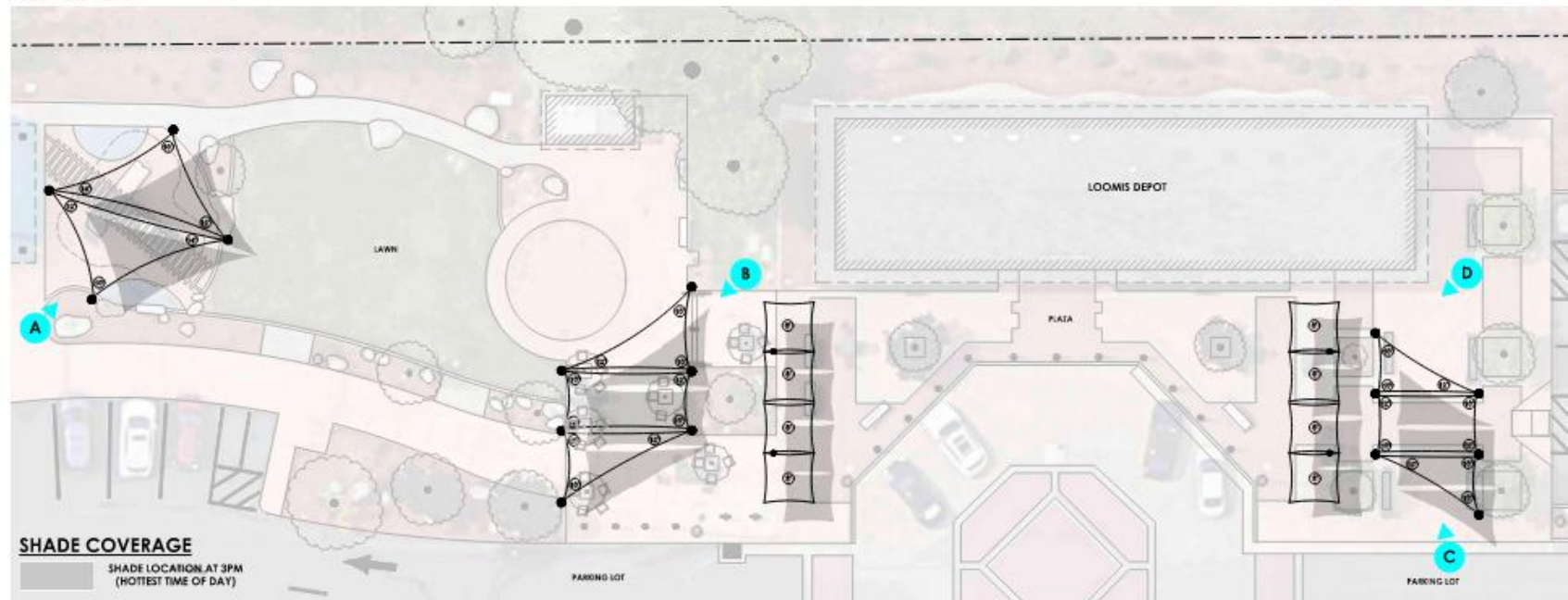
**BLUE ANCHOR PARK &
TRAIN DEPOT PLAZA**

Project Overview

December 12th Shade Sail Presentation Recap

- A conceptual shade sail layout and preliminary cost estimate was presented to the Town Council.
- The layout provided a variety of shade sail configurations options at Blue Anchor Park, and the Train Depot.
- The cost of the proposal was approximately \$450,000.

SHADE PLAN



Council + Community Feedback

Design Feedback / Questions

Feedback from the community and Council included:

- Concerns about the \$450,000 cost, being too much.
- Concerns about the safety of a shade structures over play equipment.
- Suggestions to explore the use of shade trees in lieu of shade sails.
- Suggestion to consult with an arborist to determine why the existing trees are growing poorly.

Arborist Evaluation

Plaza Tree Assessment

- Almost every tree had sun-burnt trunk wounds, which will continue to impact their growth their entire life.



- This is typically avoided by leaving the lower branches on the trees, as shade, until the trees are further developed.
- This is not a problem with larger trees as their trunk has hardened and can resist the effects of the sun.

Arborist Evaluation

Plaza Tree Assessment

- Pruning practices have focused on topping or hedging the trees, which has compromised their structure and will prevent them from ever growing into a large shade trees.



Arborist Evaluation

Plaza Tree Assessment

- The accent trees framing the building have a low branch structure potentially impeding pedestrian paths of travel. One of them had a rotated root ball.
- The top of the ornamental redbud tree was cut, leaving only sucker branches from the root ball as vegetation.



Arborist Evaluation

Plaza Tree Assessment

- Trees were lacking in the planting pocket at Blue Anchor Park, and could be replaced to provide shade.



Arborist Recommendation

Tree Planting Recommendations

- Replace existing trees with large, fully established trees.
 - ❑ 36" – 60" box size.
 - ❑ Large trees, but still cost effective.
 - ❑ Sized to immediately provide shade.
- The empty planting pocket adjacent to the Blue Anchor Park playground presents an ideal opportunity to plant large, replacement trees.

Tree Planting Recommendations

- While not critical to the objective of providing shade, the two trees framing the entrance to the Depot could be replaced with more columnar trees that wouldn't block the sidewalks.

Arborist Recommendation



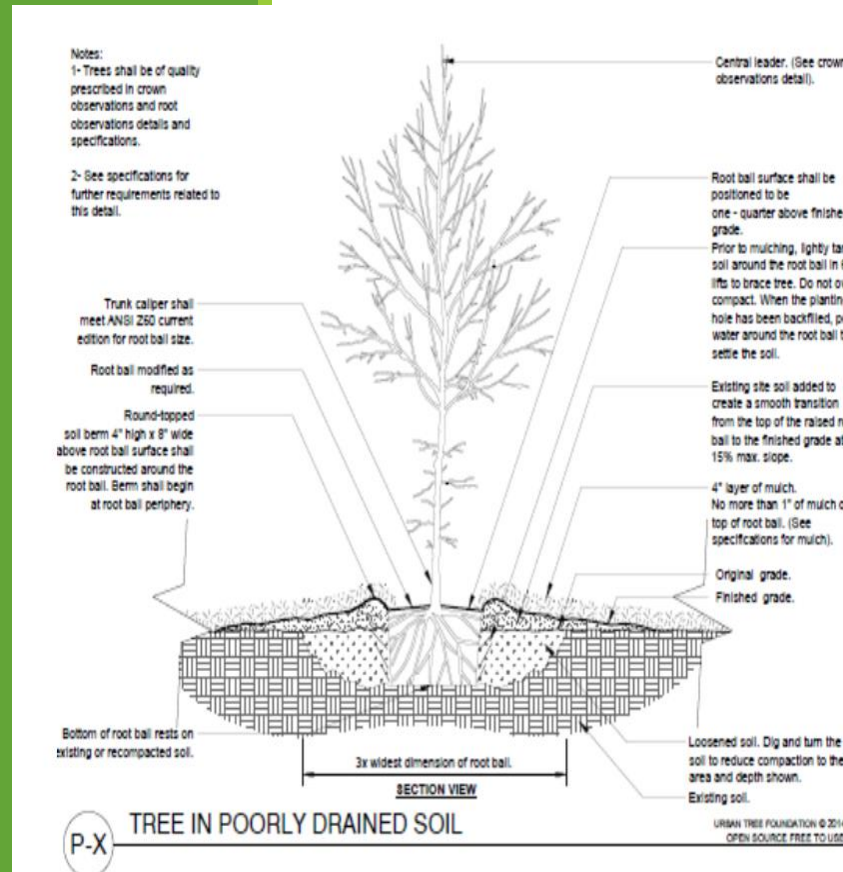
Zelkova mushashino with vibrant fall coloring

Arborist Recommendation

Tree Establishment Recommendations

- Arborist to provide specifications for planting the trees and providing proper soil amendments to ensure growth.
- Trees will take approximately 3 years to establish. During this time trees should be monitored for:

- ❑ Irrigation and proper moisture.
- ❑ Maintenance of tree stakes.
- ❑ Minimum pruning with an emphasis on maintaining structure.
- ❑ Town Arborist to oversee aftercare during establishment.

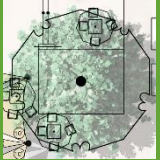


Proposed Shade Tree + Sail Layout

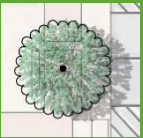
Alternative Shade Design



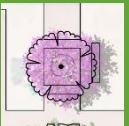
Valley Oak



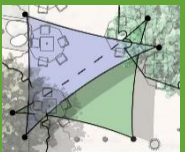
Interior Live Oak



Redpointe Red Maple



Western Redbud (Std)



Shade Sails
Overlapping 3-Point

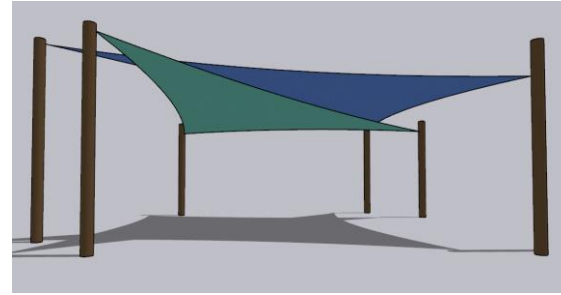


Shade Sail Enlargement

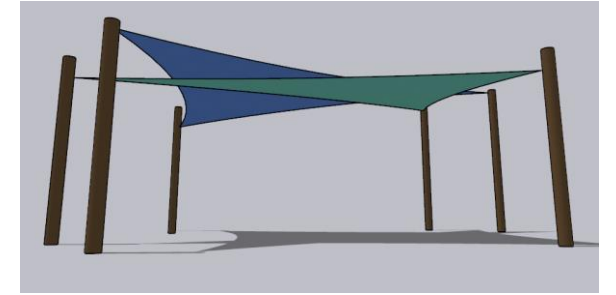
Aerial View



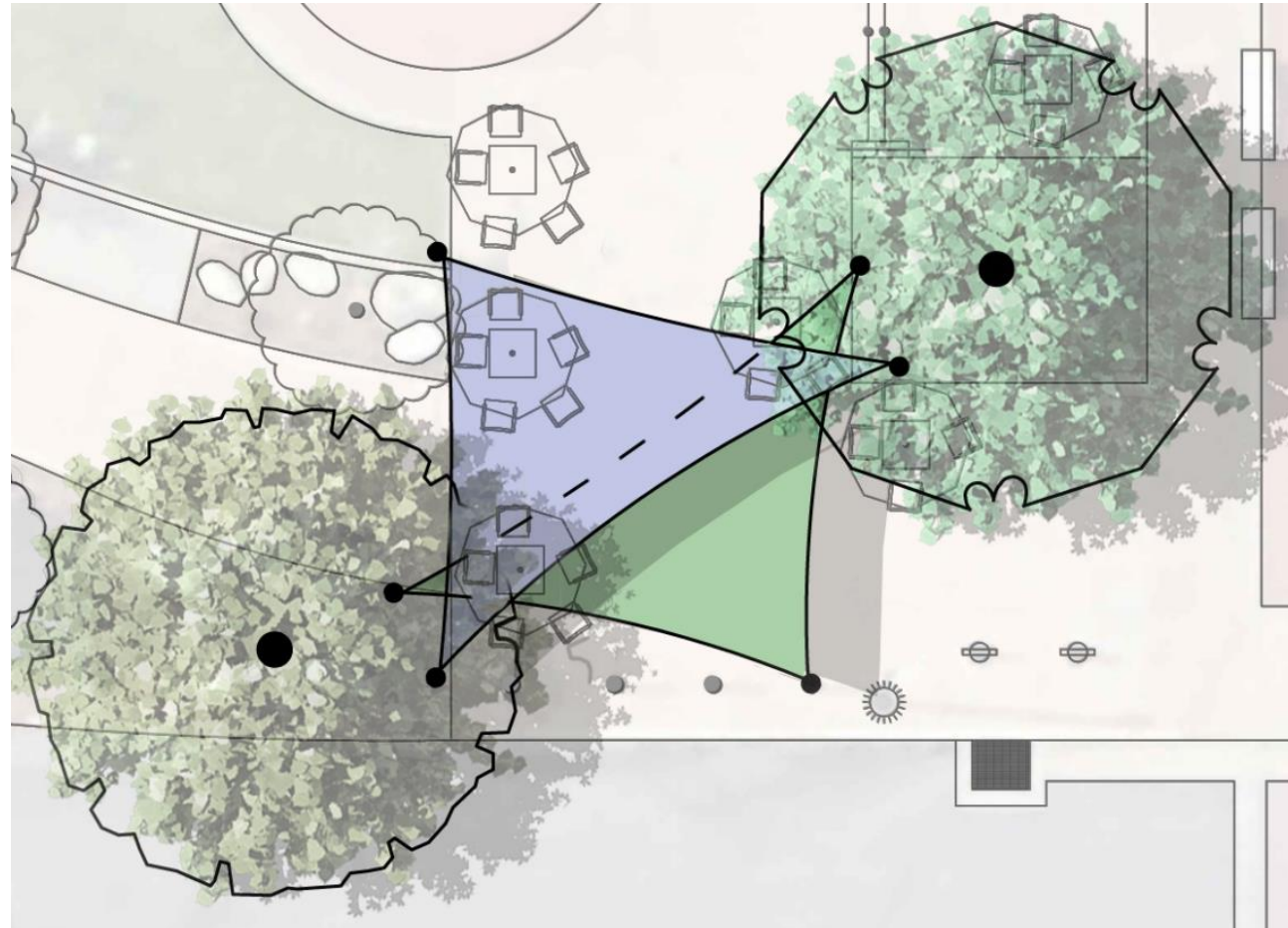
View from Driveway



View from Splashpad



Enlargement Plan



View of Blue Anchor Park Playground

Perspective Views



48" Box Valley Oak

60" Box Valley Oak

Relocated Boulder



View of East Side of Loomis Train Depot Plaza

Perspective Views



36" Box
Acer Rubrum

60" Box
Valley Oak

36" Box
Western
Redbud

PROPOSED



EXISTING

Perspective Views

View of Central Splash Pad Seating Area



- 60" Box Interior Live Oak
- 48" Box Valley Oak
- Overlapping 3-Point Shade Sails
- Umbrellas can be relocated, Tables added.

PROPOSED



EXISTING

Revised Estimated Cost

Preliminary Engineers Estimate



Historic Loomis Train Depot Plaza Shade Improvements

Loomis, California

Based on Revised Shade Concept dated 2/2/2024

Item No.	Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
1	Mobilization	1	LS	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
2	Tree and Soil Removal	11	EA	\$1,000.00	\$11,000.00
3	Relocated Boulders	2	EA	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
4	Overlapping 3 Point Sails (Superior Shade)	1	LS	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00
5	Irrigation System	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
6	36" Box Tree (Includes Amendments)	3	EA	\$1,500.00	\$4,500.00
7	48" Box Tree (Includes Amendments)	6	EA	\$3,800.00	\$22,800.00
8	60" Box Tree (Includes Amendments)	2	EA	\$6,000.00	\$12,000.00
9	Salvage and Replant Lillies	1	LS	\$500.00	\$500.00
Subtotal					\$152,800.00
Construction Contingency (15%)					\$22,920.00
Total of Construction					\$175,720.00

Timeline + Next Steps

Project Timeline

- Complete Plans and Specs February 2024
- Bidding March 2024
- Award Contract April 2024
- Commence Construction May 2024
- Project Completion Summer 2024

NOTE: The end of construction will be followed by a three-year monitoring and maintenance program, supervised by the Town Arborist.



Thank you!

MERRILL BUCK

Town Engineer

Town of Loomis

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